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[1](#)B. C: RPM-KYIV 11/13 E-MAIL

Classified By: Ambassador for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. We need to engage now with Ukraine to craft a role for this important partner at the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest even as Ukrainian political forces are focused on building a coalition and forming a new government. While President Yushchenko, FM Yatsenyuk, and Minister of Defense Hrytsenko favor a request for a MAP, the politics of government formation will prevent an early decision. There is much more to the NATO-Ukraine relationship than just MAP. While such a request could emerge, we should prepare now for a broader discussion at Bucharest - one that could include MAP, but would not be held hostage to it.

[1](#)2. (C) We believe an effective approach would include the following: 1) an early decision to agree to Ukraine's request to hold a NUC in Bucharest and to extend an invitation to President Yushchenko to attend the Summit, 2) acknowledgment at the Summit, through a statement, of Ukraine's extensive and positive cooperation with NATO, 3) capturing in the statement areas in which NATO and Ukraine can continue to deepen their relationship (e.g., air defense cooperation, airlift (including a possible helicopter initiative), and NATO support for the Euro 2012 soccer championships to be held in Ukraine and Poland), and 4) continued discussion in Kyiv and Brussels on the topic of MAP. We understand that Ukraine may announce its intention at the December 7 NUC in Brussels to qualify a unit for inclusion in NATO's Reaction Force -- which would merit special acknowledgement at Bucharest. Consideration could also be given to the evolving strategic dialogue with Ukraine that encompasses issues such as missile defense, CFE, terrorism and cyberdefense. This approach, which could be introduced at the December 7 NUC, would reaffirm and strengthen the NATO-Ukraine relationship, irrespective of when a new government is formed in Kyiv, and without precluding this new government's ability to make a decision on requesting a MAP prior to Bucharest. With November 23 finally set as the opening date for the Rada we anticipate progress in finalizing a coalition, selecting a PM, and determining a forward course on NATO by the end of the year. End Summary.

MAP Paralysis: Moving Ahead

[1](#)3. (C) Over the past several years, consideration of when/whether Ukraine would request a MAP has dominated any discussion of Ukraine's relationship with NATO. The aggressive pursuit of NATO membership under the first Orange coalition and FM Tarasyuk was followed in 2006 by the disappointment of Ukraine's low profile at the Riga Summit (where many had initially hoped that the Alliance would welcome a Ukrainian request for a MAP) and by PM Yanukovich's go-slow statement during his Brussels visit in September [1](#)2006. The whiplash effect was felt both in Allied capitals

and Kyiv, with current discussion stalled at "the door is open, Ukraine needs to take the next step." This may be true regarding the issue of MAP, but it has also brought a certain perception that there is stagnation in the broader NATO-Ukraine relationship -- detracting from current cooperation and the potential future wide range of additional areas in which NATO-Ukraine interaction could take place. We believe the relationship could be reinvigorated at Bucharest by engaging Ukraine, regardless of whether or not Ukraine decides to request a MAP.

Early Invitation for Yushchenko

14. (C) Instead of waiting for resolution of the internal political debates regarding MAP in Kyiv and Brussels, we should send a strong signal about the importance of the Ukrainian-NATO relationship by accepting the Ukrainian request for a NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) meeting in Bucharest accompanied by an invitation to President Yushchenko. Foreign Minister Yatsenyuk forwarded on October 17 a request to the Secretary General for a NUC meeting at the highest level at Bucharest. An early, positive response to the invitation would strengthen the hand of pro-NATO forces within Ministries and in the Presidential Administration, and generate pressure for timely completion of the 2008 Annual Target Plan. More importantly, it would put pressure on an incoming coalition government to develop a coherent approach toward NATO and to work with Yushchenko on formulating a unified approach toward Bucharest. Additionally, it would defuse the domestic debate over MAP by indicating that NATO remains on the policy agenda irrespective of the final outcome on the membership question. We could also use the leverage of the upcoming Summit to

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push Yushchenko and the incoming government on other key political and economic objectives.

15. (C) In discussions with our Ukrainian (and local European) interlocutors Mission Kyiv continues to emphasize that MAP is only the first step in a process and does not guarantee membership. Achieving NATO standards will take time and continued hard work, and a front-loaded discussion of membership and its Article 5 implications should not be determinants for MAP consideration. We have found that an open and informed discussion of what MAP is and is not has helped us address concerns expressed locally by some of our contacts.

Emphasizing the Positive

16. (C) In Kyiv our daily interactions with the Presidential Secretariat, MFA, MOD, NGOs and others continue to underline

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the high level of interest in engaging on NATO issues. While political uncertainty, inconsistent efforts across some Ministries, and budget constraints hinder the effectiveness of GOU efforts, we see continued progress toward achieving NATO standards. Ukraine remains the only PfP member participating in all current NATO deployments, and Defense Minister Hrytsenko continues to push the Ukrainian Armed Forces toward modernization and reform independent of on-going political uncertainties. Ukraine has 34 personnel in Iraq, has self-financed its 182 personnel contribution to UKRPOLBAT in Kosovo for the past year, and intends to increase participation in Operation Active Endeavor with deployment of its only helicopter carrying frigate in April 2008. In 2007 Ukraine hosted successful SEA BREEZE and RAPID TRIDENT exercises, and we see progress on MOD training system reforms and better use of foreign defense advisors through the establishment of a joint consultative committee.

17. (C) Additionally, the September 30 elections saw a sharp

deemphasis of NATO as a hot-button issue, and we are witnessing a slow but steady uptick, albeit from a 25 percent base, in support levels among the population. In short, we believe that a gradual normalization of the membership issue is taking place following the sharply negative politicization of NATO membership in the 2004 and 2006 elections. Giving Ukraine a substantive role and result at Bucharest would help reinforce these trendlines. A positive NUC statement detailing the key areas of ongoing NATO-Ukraine cooperation as well as unilateral Ukrainian efforts would energize and help focus future GOU activities. The statement could highlight the potential for developing a strategic dialogue on missile defense, CFE, terrorism and cyberdefense. It could also outline expansion of ongoing cooperation and specific projects, such as air defense cooperation, expansion of airlift cooperation (including a possible helicopter initiative), expanded NATO assistance for retired military personnel, and NATO assistance for the Euro 2012 soccer championship.

State-of-Play in Kyiv

18. (C) While the coalition formation saga continues in Kyiv, we have seen no recent change on NATO positions by any of the lead political actors. PM Yanukovich and BYuT leader Tymoshenko have maintained their cautious positions (ref A), strongly supporting robust cooperation with NATO while presenting NATO membership as an "over the horizon" decision. President Yushchenko's request to European partners at the October 22 Southeast Europe Defense Minister's meeting in Kyiv for assistance in realizing MAP tracks his consistent forward-leaning position on NATO (ref B). We asked FM Yatsenyuk during his November 14 meeting with DAS Kramer about Ukrainian Ambassador in Washington Shamshur's hint to EUR PDAS Volker at a possible MAP request at the December 6 Ministerial in Brussels (ref C). Yatsenyuk's response was that the issue remained difficult as "some" in Kyiv were against a MAP request (we believe he was referencing Tymoshenko's overall position and recent refusal to sign a letter asking for MAP as one of numerous preconditions for Yushchenko's support of her as PM). Shamshur's statement reflects the difficulties MFA is encountering in developing and projecting NATO policy during the current political limbo in Kyiv.

19. (C) Preparations for the December 7 NUC have also been affected by the coalition formation delay, with the MFA unable to clear a draft Joint Statement internally and also encountering delays with finalizing Ukrainian Government approval of the 2007 Annual Target Plan (ATP) evaluation and 2008 ATP submission. On the Ukrainian side, the key NUC deliverable will be the MFA's plan (shared with us in confidence) to announce Ukraine's intention to qualify a unit

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for NATO's Reaction Force, a deliverable that had been initially intended for the Bucharest Summit. Another positive should be the arrival of new Ambassador Ihor Sagach, currently Ambassador to Norway, and DCM Vladyslav Yasniuk, who has been acting Director of MFAs NATO Directorate. Both are respected veterans of the MFA's IO and NATO offices and should strengthen what has been an underperforming Ukrainian NATO Mission. Additionally, the opening session of the Rada (set for November 23), and related deadlines for formation of a coalition and government within 30 days or by December 23, should end the current policy impasse and hopefully provide a clear NATO policy early in its tenure.

110. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/kyiv.
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